hsi

Company
PepsiCo

Solution
Chemical Management

Industry
Food and Beverage

Size
300,000 Employees

Location
Worldwide

How PepsiCo Streamlined the Management of Chemicals and Safety Data Sheets

PepsiCo is well known for marketing, manufacturing, and distributing Pepsi soda, but the multinational company has more than 500 brands and operates in over 200 countries on every continent except Antarctica. Across that breadth of production, ensuring safety in every manufacturing facility is critical and complex.

An example is maintaining updated and accurate safety data sheets (SDSs). The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires chemical manufacturers, distributors, and importers to keep SDSs for every hazardous chemical used. Although products like foods and beverages may not contain dangerous chemicals, those used for refrigeration, cleaning, or transportation might.

The more safety data sheets you have, the more difficult it gets to meet the OSHA requirement. *"At PepsiCo, we have tens of thousands of safety data sheets. But if you look at them in every language, we also might have ten different versions of each SDS,"* explained Stephanie Binderup, Global EHS Systems Analyst at PepsiCo. *"Staying on top of the current version is very challenging for any organization I've been to, whether large or small. And it's a challenging undertaking when you're trying to manage the day-to-day activities in a plant,"* she added.

How does PepsiCo do it? The company uses a safety management platform that helps ensure SDSs are accessible, provide accurate inventory, and stay current.

Ensuring SDSs are Accessible

"We have left the days of the big SDS binder behind," Binderup stated. *"We don't have the long table of safety data sheets anymore. We have them all electronically in a read-only version on the HSI Chemical Management platform."* The platform makes it fast and easy to look up chemicals — a nice-to-have benefit anytime, and a crucial one in an emergency.

In the U.S., companies must tell employees about the chemicals they're handling and inform the community about any hazardous chemical exposure. The HSI Chemical Management platform makes this process simpler for PepsiCo to do. Moreover, since PepsiCo operates worldwide in countries with varying notification requirements, the software allows each location to tailor the notifications needed to stay compliant.

"Globally, it is a tremendous responsibility for our business to make sure that people truly understand what applies to them, and those requirements change all the time. It's a moving target," Binderup said.

Providing Accurate Reporting with SDSs

Binderup noted that quickly accessing chemicals through safety data sheets was only one advantage of the HSI Chemical Management platform. Safety data sheets must be kept current, which can be a monumental task requiring every facility to check and log the substances they have on hand as well as the chemicals contained in each substance.

"If you have diesel fuel and it has twelve or fifteen different chemicals in it, you have to report on how much fuel you had on hand and how much you used in the year. Then, break down the components for each chemical in the fuel, including how much was used and so on. It's a lot of math." Binderup said.

Inventory logging is only one part of the responsibility. Even more critical is accurately reporting on the substances.

Every company, regardless of where it is located, has to meet multiple requirements from different agencies, Binderup explained. In the U.S., companies must abide by regulations from OSHA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and international, state, and local governments.

A manual process, even using a spreadsheet, is time-consuming and prone to error. Those mistakes can result in penalties and fines from those regulatory agencies.

The HSI Chemical Management platform collects and analyzes the electronic data sheets to track the amount and type of chemicals and their compounds that are on site, reducing mistakes. This consolidation of data is a *"huge win,"* Binderup said.

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Keeping SDSs Up to Date

Even if a safety data sheet is accessible, it is not helpful if its information is out of date. But that can happen whenever a chemical manufacturer changes a substance and alters the SDS on their end. Businesses that use that chemical must make sure they update their own copy of the SDS.

An outdated SDS is no minor issue. If an employee is exposed to a hazardous chemical, they need accurate information on what the chemical is and what treatment is necessary. There's no time to waste looking for a current version of the SDS. Employees can be harmed, and companies can get fined and suffer reputational damage.

For PepsiCo, one SDS change means updating forms in multiple countries and languages. Keeping data sheets updated is cumbersome, but it's essential to ensuring employee and community safety. HSI enables the company to simplify updates through the platform and on-site inventory technicians, Binderup said. *"For a company our size, keeping our library of SDS current is no easy task. But HSI has a team that helps us with that refresh effort, which is absolutely critical."*

A Solution for Streamlining SDS Management

Not all businesses have the same complexity in managing SDS that PepsiCo does. However, for many, their need for streamlining safety data sheet management is similar. Binderup said the company selected the HSI Chemical Management platform because it was global, intuitive, and easy to navigate.

"It has critical functionalities that help us keep our safety data sheets up to date and help with reporting because we just cannot do it all by ourselves. Those are the absolute minimums for us."

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